

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND claims 1, 4 and 9, CANCEL claims 9 and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer and ADD claims 13-17 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A blood collection device comprising:
 - a housing having an open rear end adapted to accommodate an evacuated blood collecting tube, and a front end;
 - a needle holder in the front end;
 - a needle which is attached to the needle holder and which is double ended and has a first end (outer end) that projects from the housing and a second end (inner end) that projects into the housing, the needle holder being releasably attached relative to the housing to enable the needle holder and the attached needle to be retracted; and
 - a needle retraction device, the needle retraction device able to be pushed into the housing, the needle retraction device comprising at least two engagement means adapted to release the needle holder from the housing and to respond to a retraction bias to retract the needle holder containing the attached needle into the needle retraction device, wherein
 - wherein the needle holder contains includes an annular ring with at least two finger members extending therefrom that engage relative to the housing to retain the needle holder to the housing, each finger member being deflectable between a locking position where the finger member retains the needle holder to the housing, and a release position where the needle holder can be retracted into the housing, and
 - and wherein each of the at least two engagement means is at least partially housed in abutment with a shoulder of a recess defined within an inner surface of the needle retraction device in opposition to the retraction bias prior to the release of the needle holder from the housing.

2. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the needle holder comprises an assembly of at least two parts, the first part being an inner part and containing a passageway through which a puncture needle can extend to fit the

puncture needle to the inner part, the second part comprising an outer nosepiece, the at least two finger members being attached relative to the nosepiece.

3. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the needle retraction device comprises an elongate hollow body which contains a vacuum and which has an open end, a piston which closes off the open end of the elongate hollow body and which is adapted for sliding movement within the hollow body, and which is releasably attached relative to the open end.

4. (Currently Amended) The device as claimed in claim 3, further comprising wherein the piston comprises at least two finger members on the piston which releasably attach the piston relative to the one end of the hollow body, each finger member of the piston being movable between a locking position where the piston is attached to the hollow body, and a release position where the piston can be retracted into the hollow body under the influence of the vacuum.

5. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the at least two finger members on the piston extend forwardly from the piston, and the at least two finger members on the needle holder extend rearwardly such that as the needle retraction device is pushed against the rear of the needle holder, the at least two finger members on the piston release the at least two finger members on the needle holder, and engage to the at least two finger members on the needle holder.

6. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 5, wherein the housing is provided with a ramp in a forward portion of the housing, the ramp contacting the at least two finger members on the piston when the needle retraction device is pushed against the rear of the needle holder, the at least two finger members riding along the ramp to release the at least two finger members from engagement with the hollow body to enable the piston containing the attached needle holder to be retracted into the hollow body under the influence of vacuum.

7. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the piston contains a pierceable material that is pierced by the inner end of the needle when the needle retraction device is pushed against the rear of the needle holder to seal the inner end of the needle.

8. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 7, wherein the piston contains a speed controller to control a speed of retraction of the piston into the hollow body, the speed controller comprising a sealing member extending from the piston and sealingly engaging with the hollow body to increase the frictional force of the piston on the hollow body.

9-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least two finger members are radially spaced about the needle holder.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (New) A blood collection device, comprising:
a housing including open rear and front ends, the front end including a grip portion and a trigger;
a needle holder, including an annular ring surrounding a seal portion and fingers, coupled to an exterior surface of the annular ring, that are biased to clasp the grip portion when the needle holder is inserted into the housing;
a tube, including an open front end, which includes a first section that abuts the grip portion when the tube is inserted into the housing and a second section recessed from the first section; and
a movable part, biased within the tube to move away from a loaded position proximate the front end of the tube, the movable part including engagement parts, each of which includes an impact part at a distal end thereof and an abutment part at a midpoint thereof, the engagement parts being biased such that, when the movable part is in the

loaded position, the abutment parts abut the second section in opposition to the movable part bias, wherein

when the tube, with the movable part in the loaded position, is inserted into the housing, the trigger impacts the impact parts and moves the movable part into a position at which the tube squeezes the engagement parts to grip the fingers and to unclasp the fingers from the grip portion and at which the movable part, being thereby coupled to the unclashed needle holder, is freed to move under the movable part bias.

14. (New) The blood collection device according to claim 13, wherein the first section of the tube guards surfaces of the engagement parts and the impact parts.

15. (New) The blood collection device according to claim 13, wherein the tube is selectively secured within the housing.

16. (New) A system for blood collection comprising the blood collection device of claim 13, a double ended needle extending through the seal portion through which blood flows and a blood collector to receive the blood flows prior to the insertion of the tube in the housing.

17. (New) A blood collection device, comprising:
a housing including open rear and front ends, the front end including a grip portion and a trigger;
a needle holder, including an annular ring surrounding a seal portion and fingers, coupled to an exterior surface of the annular ring, that are biased to clasp the grip portion when the needle holder is inserted into the housing;
a tube, including an open front end, which includes a first section that abuts the grip portion when the tube is inserted into the housing and a second section recessed from the first section; and
a movable part, biased within the tube to move away from a loaded position proximate the front end of the tube, the movable part including engagement parts, each of which includes:

an abutment part, at a midpoint thereof, that, when the movable part is in the loaded position, is biased to abut the second section in opposition to the movable part bias, and

an impact part, at a distal end thereof, being formed integrally with the abutment part and with an impact receiving surface to receive impacts from the trigger when the tube, with the movable part in the loaded position, is inserted into the housing such that the movable part is forced, in opposition to the bias on the abutment part, to move into a position at which the tube squeezes the engagement parts to grip the fingers and to unclasp the fingers from the grip portion and at which the movable part, being thereby coupled to the unclamped needle holder, is freed to move under the movable part bias.